



Mercy Housing

Welcome
to your new home!

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This workbook is designed to be used as part of a housing orientation that includes a case manager and a refugee family. It is NOT intended to be a stand alone document.

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Workbook Icons

What They Mean

Throughout this workbook, you will find icons on certain pages – this is what each icon means:



This means your caseworker,
the person who is going through
this book with you.

Name: _____

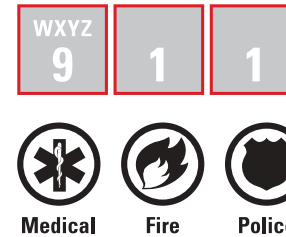
Phone Number: _____



This means your landlord or
apartment manager.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____



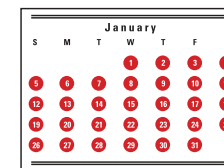
Dialing 9-1-1 on your
telephone will bring you
help fast. Only call if
you really need help in
personal emergencies.



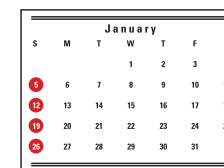
This means “NO!”
Do not do what the
picture shows.



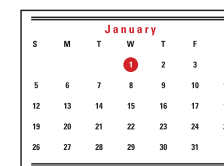
**This means you are
wasting your money.**
Try not to do these things.



Do this every day.



Do this once a week.



Do this once a month.

Common Items & Their Names



Eviction Notice



Refrigerator
Fridge



Sink
Faucet



Fire Extinguisher



Garbage
Disposal



Bathtub
Tub



Smoke Alarm



Stove
Range



Toilet



Dumpster
Trash
Garbage



Dishwasher



Thermostat



Clothes Washer
Washing Machine

Paying Bills

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
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You must pay your rent, utility and other bills on time **EACH MONTH** to establish and maintain good credit. Good credit will help you borrow money to buy a house, a car or pay for a college education. Use a checklist to help you pay your bills on time.

NEVER MAIL CASH!



You or your case manager should walk through the apartment with your landlord to identify any damage or things that need fixing before you move in. This will help you get your security deposit back when you move out.



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Clean your carpet with a vacuum cleaner at least once a week. Clean up spills with soap and water immediately.

Furniture is your property to keep when you move on. It will last a long time if you keep it nice! Your landlord will expect you to take all of your furniture and belongings when you move out.

Remove shoes before entering your apartment. This will help keep the carpets clean.



Maintaining Your Apartment

Living Room

Teach children to be careful of the things in your apartment. Don't climb or jump on the furniture!

Teach children not to play in the drapes or window shades, and not to mark on the walls.

Don't pour liquid on the carpet. It will soak through the layers underneath and make a stain that is hard to remove.

Clean up spills **IMMEDIATELY!**



Maintaining Your Apartment

Living Room



If you have trouble with a stain, ask your caseworker or landlord for advice.

You may be able to use an aerosol rug cleaner which you can buy at the grocery store.

For more serious stains, you can rent a rug-cleaning machine, also from most grocery stores.

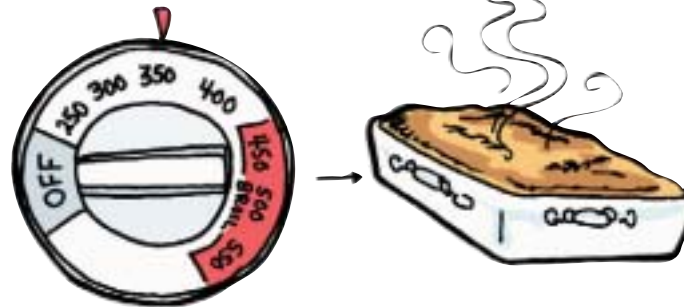
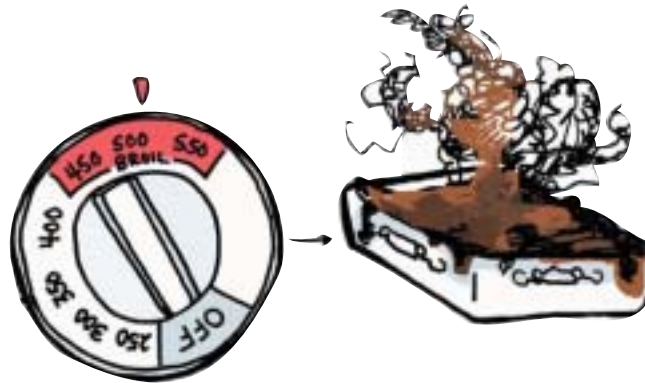
NEVER USE BLEACH ON CARPET!



COOKING & BAKING

When cooking food on top of the stove, always begin on medium heat and then adjust. If you begin on high heat, you will burn the food and scorch the pan. You may even burn the bottom out of the pan!

To use the oven to cook food, or bake meat or bread, place the dial on BAKE, which is 350-400 degrees Fahrenheit. The top element is for broiling only. It becomes very hot and will quickly burn food. Clean any spilled food in the oven as soon as it is cool.



FOOD PREPARATION



If you damage the countertops, you will have to pay for it when you move out.

When chopping or slicing with a knife, use a cutting board.

NEVER CUT DIRECTLY ON THE COUNTER TOP!

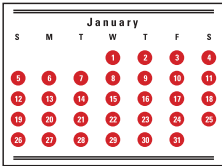
NEVER CUT ON THE FLOOR!

NEVER PUT A HOT PAN DIRECTLY ON A COUNTER TOP!

Use a hot pad or a dish towel under the hot pan.



MEAL CLEANUP



Clean the countertops every day. Never leave food out on the counter without covering it with plastic, foil or a dish towel.

It is better to cover food and keep it in the refrigerator. Clean the shelves and drawers of the refrigerator regularly with soap and water.

Food left out will attract insects, rats and mice.

WHEN YOU MOVE OUT YOU WILL BE CHARGED IF YOUR REFRIGERATOR IS NOT CLEAN!



DISHWASHER

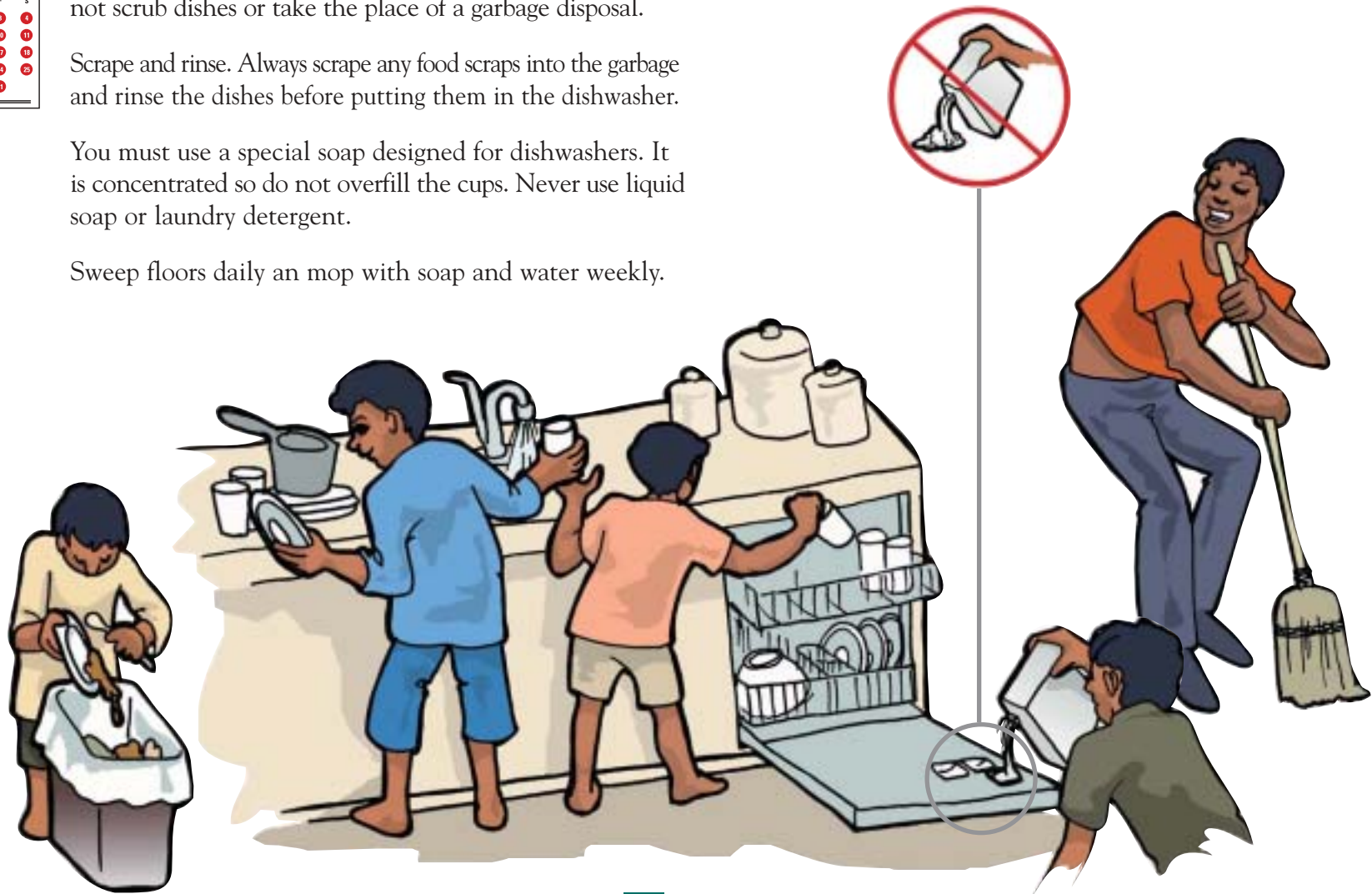
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A dishwasher kills germs on dishes and silverware. It does not scrub dishes or take the place of a garbage disposal.

Scrape and rinse. Always scrape any food scraps into the garbage and rinse the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher.

You must use a special soap designed for dishwashers. It is concentrated so do not overfill the cups. Never use liquid soap or laundry detergent.

Sweep floors daily and mop with soap and water weekly.



STOVE

January						
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Wipe up grease and food spills **IMMEDIATELY**, and clean your stove daily.

Spilled or burned food and grease are dangerous. They smell bad and attract bugs, rats and mice. **SPILLED GREASE CAN CAUSE FALLS & CAN CAUSE FIRES!**

Don't put grease down the sink. Pour it in an empty can and throw it away in the trash.



SINK/GARBAGE DISPOSAL

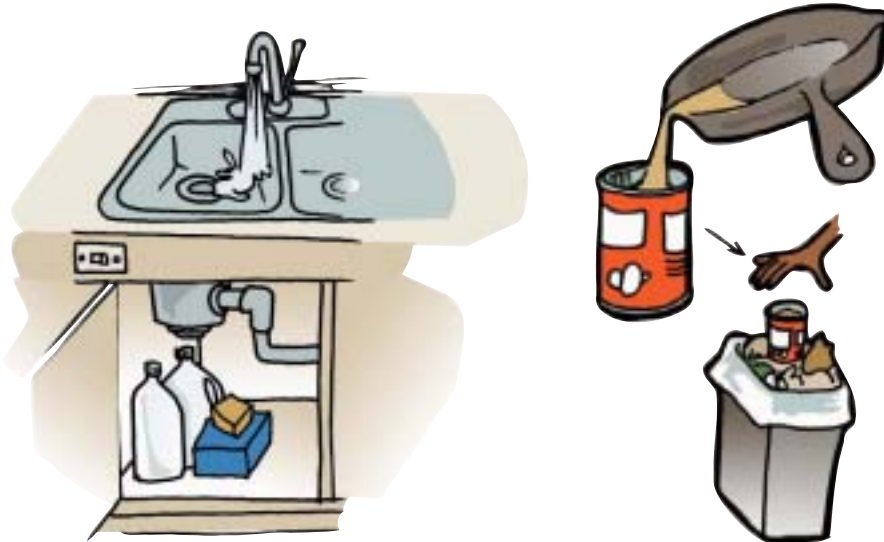


If your garbage disposal becomes stuck, water may back up in the sink. **NEVER PUT YOUR HAND INSIDE THE DISPOSAL.** Turn it off and call your apartment manager.

Always run cold water while operating the garbage disposal.

Don't put bones, egg shells, fruit pits, onion peels or celery down the garbage disposal.

Never put metal down the disposal!



GARBAGE / DUMPSTER

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Place garbage in the provided trash bins in your apartment. Line them with plastic garbage bags.

Take out your garbage every day to a secure garbage can or dumpster. The smell of garbage will attract insects, rats and mice. Strange smells can cause complaints from your neighbors to the apartment manager.

NEVER leave garbage in the hallway of the apartment.



GENERAL CLEANING

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The bathroom must be cleaned weekly. This includes the floor, and the inside and outside of the toilet, sink, bathtub and/or shower.

The bathtub must be cleaned to prevent staining.

Do not allow hair or any other items to go down the drains.



TOILET PROBLEMS



Clean inside and around the bottom of the toilet, weekly. Do not allow urine to stay on the floor.

Use a brush to clean the toilet. This will prevent germs from building up inside the toilet. **DO NOT USE THIS BRUSH FOR ANYTHING ELSE!**

Never flush female sanitary products, garbage, food, large amounts of toilet paper, or other items down the toilet. **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN NEVER TO PUT TOYS OR OTHER ITEMS DOWN THE TOILET!**

If your toilet overflows, call the apartment manager immediately.

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WATER LEAKS & SPILLS



Always keep the shower curtain inside the bathtub, and always clean up water on the floor.

Do not allow water to escape onto the floor.

If you have a clog or a leak, call your apartment manager immediately.

You may be charged for water damage that you don't report.



- 1.) Sort clothing into piles of light colors and dark colors. Use hot water for white and light colored clothing and warm or cold water for dark clothing.
- 2.) Put clothing and laundry detergent into the machine.
- 3.) Start the machine.
- 4.) Do not pack clothes into the washing machine or dryer.
- 5.) Always clean out the lint filter in the dryer.
- 6.) Do not leave your clothing unattended.



Landlords are required to provide a smoke alarm in your apartment.

The smoke alarm must always be working.
It could save your life.

You are responsible for replacing a dead battery.

Test the smoke alarm by touching the small button on the front.

If the alarm goes off while cooking, turn it off by pushing that button.

ONLY REMOVE THE BATTERY IN THE SMOKE ALARM TO REPLACE IT!

NEVER TAKE THE SMOKE ALARM DOWN PERMANENTLY OR LEAVE THE BATTERY OUT OF IT!





If your smoke alarm doesn't work, call your apartment manager.

Know where the fire extinguishers are in your apartment or building, and learn how to use them.

If a fire starts in your kitchen, **NEVER** throw water on it!





Medical



Fire



Police

- 1.) If the fire is small, try to smother it by covering it with another pan or lid. Be careful not to burn yourself.
- 2.) If that doesn't work, or the fire is too big to get close enough, use the fire extinguisher as you have been shown.
- 3.) If you don't think you can put the fire out, **GET OUT OF THE BUILDING AND CALL 911!**

YOUR LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR THINGS!





CALL 9-1-1!

If you can get out of your apartment, put wet towels or handkerchiefs over your mouths and move quickly to the exit.

This is easier if the hallways have been kept clean and empty. Alert neighbors if you can.

If you can't get out the door or a ground-level window, wait for help to get out a window. Put wet towels along doors where smoke is coming in.



Keeping the common areas of your apartment building clean makes it safe and will help you get along well with your neighbors.





Door and window screens are important to keep children and pets inside your home, and to keep bugs and animals out.

If screens are missing or torn, call your apartment manager!





DIAL 911 FOR ANY MEDICAL EMERGENCY!



Medical



Fire



Police

Paramedics or Fire Department rescue personnel will come immediately to your home to treat the emergency.

9-1-1 is for life or limb-threatening emergencies. You may be charged if you then need an ambulance to get to a hospital.

Smoking:

American cigarettes will keep burning even if you're not smoking them.

Do not smoke in bed.

Do not smoke around children or pregnant women.

You will be charged for burns in your apartment.





Don't unlock your door for anyone you don't know.



Medical



Fire



Police

Ask strangers, including people in uniform, to show you their identification first.

Teach children not to open the door for strangers.

Always keep your door locked, even when you are home. Shut and lock your windows before you leave to prevent theft and other crimes.

If you forget your keys and are locked out of your apartment, it can cost \$50.00 or more to have your landlord open the door. If you lose your keys, it can cost even more to replace the locks.

IF YOU SEE PEOPLE STEALING, CALL 9-1-1!





Check your mailbox daily. Do not throw “junk mail” on the floor of the lobby.

Open and read your mail, and put important papers in a safe place.

Call your caseworker for help if there is ever anything you do not understand.



If you receive mail you don't understand, or a notice is posted on your apartment door, you must respond IMMEDIATELY.

This is how eviction notices are posted.





Landlords often require a written notice before they will make repairs in your apartment. Use a repair request form to write this request, or ask your caseworker to help.



My toilet is clogged.



My garbage disposal doesn't work.



My screens need repair.

Repair Requests



My stove doesn't work.



My faucet is leaking.

Being A Good Neighbor

Noise, Problem Solving



Most people living in apartments go to sleep around 10 p.m. Please keep children quiet, keep conversations at a low level and don't play loud music between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. Your landlord may have specific rules about noise that must be followed.

If you have disagreements with your neighbors, try to resolve them together. If you cannot, ask for help from your caseworker or apartment manager.



Renters often pay for heat, electricity, and air conditioning. These utilities can be very expensive. Follow these tips to keep your utility bills low.

The thermostat controls the temperature in your apartment. It should be set between 65 and 75 degrees in the winter, and between 70 and 75 degrees in the summer if you have air conditioning.

Always turn off most of the lights when you leave your apartment. Leave one or two on, so thieves will think someone is at home.



Turning the thermostat all the way up does not make the heat come on any higher or faster, and if you forget to turn it down again, it can cost you a lot of money!

IF THE FURNACE IS RUNNING, THE WINDOWS SHOULD BE CLOSED.

IF THE AIR CONDITIONING IS RUNNING, THE WINDOWS SHOULD BE CLOSED.





If you can feel air blowing through around closed doors or windows, ask the manager to add weather stripping to keep the heat in.

Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible. Leaving the door open wastes electricity, and can cause food to spoil.

Put on extra layers of clothing when you feel cold.

Socks on your feet make you feel much warmer, and help prevent illness.

NEVER HAVE THE WINDOWS OPEN WHEN THE HEAT IS ON!



Summary

- 1.) Pay your bills.
- 2.) Keep things clean.
- 3.) Take care of property.
- 4.) Know how to deal with fire and other emergencies.
- 5.) Pay attention to mail and notices.
- 6.) Be a good neighbor.
- 7.) Don't waste energy.



Pay Bills



Keep Things Clean



Take Care of Property



Know How to Deal with Emergencies



Read Mail & Notices



Be a Good Neighbor



Don't Waste Energy

Key collaborators on this project are:

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